

## CLAIMS:

1. A method of operating a production line to produce a decorated plastic product, the method comprising  
5 extruding a strip of plastics material from a strip extruder,  
moving the strip along the production line in sequence from the strip extruder past a decoration media dispenser to a thermoformer,  
dispensing decoration media from the decoration media dispenser onto a portion of the strip, and  
10 thermoforming the strip portion into the decorated plastic product by operation of the thermoformer after the dispensing act.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the dispensing act includes spraying decoration media from a sprayer onto the strip portion.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the dispensing act includes  
15 supplying pressurized decoration media from a media supplier to the sprayer and supplying pressurized air from an air supplier to the sprayer.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the dispensing act includes controlling operation of the media supplier and the air supplier by operation of a controller.
- 20 5. The method of claim 4, wherein the media supplying act includes pressurizing decoration media by operation of a media pump, sensing the pressure of the pressurized decoration media, and providing media pressure information representative of the pressure of the pressurized decoration media to the controller and the controlling act includes controlling operation of the media pump  
25 based on the media pressure information.
6. The method of claim 4, wherein the air supplying act includes pressurizing air by operation of an air pump, sensing the pressure of the pressurized air, and providing air pressure information representative of the pressure of the pressurized air to the controller and the controlling act includes controlling operation  
30 of the air pump based on the air pressure information.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein the dispensing act includes rolling decoration media onto the strip portion.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the rolling act includes rolling a transfer roller against an applicator roller to provide decoration media on the applicator roller and rolling the applicator roller against the strip portion to apply decoration media on the strip portion.

5 9. The method of claim 8, wherein the dispensing act includes supplying pressurized decoration media from a media supplier to the transfer roller and controlling operation of the media supplier by operation of a controller.

10 10. The method of claim 9, wherein the media supplying act includes pressurizing the decoration media by operation of a media pump, sensing the pressure of the pressurized decoration media, and providing media pressure information representative of the pressure of the pressurized decoration media to the controller and the controlling act includes controlling operation of the media pump based on the media pressure information.

15 11. A method of operating a production line to produce a decorated plastic product, the method comprising  
extruding a strip of plastics material from a strip extruder,  
moving the strip along the production line in sequence from the strip extruder past a strip mover and a decoration media dispenser toward a thermoformer by operation of the strip mover,  
20 dispensing decoration media from the decoration media dispenser onto a portion of the strip after the strip portion passes the strip mover, and  
thermoforming the strip portion into the decorated plastic product by operation of the thermoformer after the dispensing act.

25 12. The method of claim 11, wherein the strip mover and the decoration media dispenser are coupled to a frame.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the dispensing act includes spraying the decoration media onto the strip portion from a plurality of sprayers aligned along the width of the strip portion and the plurality of sprayers and the strip mover are coupled to a frame.

30 14. The method of claim 11, wherein the dispensing act includes rolling a transfer roller on an applicator roller to provide decoration media on the applicator roller and rolling the applicator roller on the strip portion to apply

decoration media on the strip portion and the transfer roller, the applicator roller, and the strip mover are coupled to a frame.

15. A method of operating a production line to produce a decorated plastic product, the method comprising

5 extruding a strip of plastics material from a strip extruder,  
moving the strip along the production line in sequence from the strip extruder past a decoration media dispenser and a strip mover toward a thermoformer by operation of the strip mover,  
dispensing decoration media from the decoration media dispenser onto

10 a portion of the strip before the strip portion passes the strip mover, and  
thermoforming the strip portion into the decorated plastic product by operation of the thermoformer after the dispensing act and after the strip portion passes the strip mover.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the strip mover and the

15 decoration media dispenser are coupled to a frame.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein the moving act includes driving a drive roller against the strip portion by operation of a motor, the dispensing act includes spraying the decoration media from a sprayer onto the strip portion, and the roller, the motor, and the sprayer are coupled to a frame.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein the moving act includes driving a drive roller against the strip portion by operation of a motor, the dispensing act includes rolling a transfer roller against an applicator roller to provide decoration media on the applicator roller and rolling the applicator roller against the strip portion to apply decoration media on the strip portion, and the drive roller, the motor, the

20 transfer roller, and the applicator roller are coupled to a frame.

19. A method of operating a production line to produce a decorated plastic product, the method comprising

extruding a strip of plastics material,  
dispensing decoration media onto a portion of the strip, and

30 thermoforming the strip portion into the decorated plastic product after the dispensing act.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the dispensing act includes spraying decoration media onto the strip portion.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the spraying act includes operating a sprayer and the dispensing act includes supplying pressurized decoration media from a media supplier to the sprayer and supplying pressurized air from an air supplier to the sprayer and controlling operation of the media supplier and the air  
5 supplier.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the media supplying act includes pressurizing decoration media by operation of a media pump, sensing the pressure of the pressurized decoration media, and providing media pressure information representative of the pressure of the pressurized decoration media to a  
10 controller, the air supplying act includes pressurizing air by operation of an air pump, sensing the pressure of the pressurized air, and providing air pressure information representative of the pressure of the pressurized air to the controller, and the controlling act includes controlling operation of the media pump based on the media pressure information and controlling operation of the air pump based on the air  
15 pressure information.

23. The method of claim 19, wherein the dispensing act includes rolling decoration media onto the strip portion.

24. The method of claim 19, wherein the dispensing act includes dispensing decoration media from a decoration media dispenser onto the strip portion,  
20 supplying pressurized decoration media to the decoration media dispenser by operation of a media supplier, and controlling operation of the media supplier by operation of a controller.

25. The method of claim 19, further comprising cooling the strip portion by operation of a strip cooler before the dispensing act.

26. The method of claim 19, further comprising sensing the thickness of the strip portion before the dispensing act.

27. The method of claim 19, further comprising moving the strip portion through slack formed in the strip after the dispensing act.